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ABSTRACT

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Teacher and Principal Reactions to an Involuntary Transfer Program to Integrate Faculties in the Chicago Public Schools

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Abstract

Teachers and principals who were involuntarily reassigned to integrate faculties in the Chicago public schools were surveyed about their transfer experiences. Transferred teachers but not transferred principals believed the reassignments would result in a decline in student achievement. Most transferred staff rated their integration assignment as equally or more satisfactory than their previous assignment on five of seven dimensions. However, non-minority and experienced teachers were generally dissatisfied with their new post. Increased commuting distance was the largest source of staff complaints. All staff reported minimal support at their new school.

Teacher and Principal Reactions to an Involuntary Transfer Program to Integrate Faculties in the Chicago Public Schools

On May 25, 1977 the Board of Education of the City of Chicago adopted a comprehensive plan to implement the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The plan stated that the racial/ethnic composition of the teaching faculty in each Chicago public school would be no more than 60% minority and no less than 35% minority. At the time, the faculties of only 38.4% of Chicago's more than 600 schools were "integrated" by this standard (Chicago Board of Education, 1977). In effect, the plan guaranteed that the racial composition of faculty in each school would deviate by no more than 14% from the racial composition of the entire teaching staff of the Chicago public schools, 54% white and 46% minority at that time. It further provided that the percentage of minority principals assigned to non-minority schools would equal the percentage of minority principals in the system as a whole. The plan called for the reassignment of more than 2,000 teachers and 80 principals effective September, 1977. Its acceptance in October, 1977 by officials of the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare ended 12 years of negotiation between that Department and the Chicago Board of Education.

The plan was unprecedented in terms of the number of faculty involuntarily reassigned and controversial because of the computer generated matches made among white and minority teachers randomly selected from defined experience and certification categories. The Board of Education maintained that its methods were impartial and fairer than transfer assignments based solely on human judgment. The Board described its plan as a "model for the nation."

PROCEDURE

During February 1978, a questionnaire was sent to all 1,467 teachers who had been transferred to enhance faculty integration who were in their new schools as of January 11, 1978[1] and to a randomly selected sample of 625 teachers who had not been reassigned. A similar questionnaire was mailed to 86 principals who had been transferred[2] and to a randomly selected sample of 50 principals who had not been reassigned. These groups will be referred to throughout the remainder of this report as, respectively, the transferred teacher, the control teacher, the transferred principal, and the control principal groups.

The questionnaires addressed staff perceptions of the effects of the involuntary reassignments on pupil achievement and school administration. The questionnaires also sought to determine how satisfied transferred teachers and principals were with their integration reassignments, what formal efforts made to ease transition difficulties had been helpful to transferred staff, and what steps the Board of Education might take to alleviate transition difficulties that had persisted during the 1977-78 academic year.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the number of questionnaires mailed and the number and

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Insert Table 1 about here

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percentage of questionnaires returned from transferred teachers, control teachers, transferred principals and control principals. The return rates were high for all four groups. Overall, 1,176 of the 2,228 persons surveyed (52.8%) returned a completed questionnaire by April 1.[3] In general, transferred

staff was more likely to return the questionnaire than control staff (56.6% vs. 44.6%) and principals responded with greater frequency than teachers (77.9% vs. 51.1%).

Teacher race (minority vs. white) and experience (1-4 years, 5-9 years, and 10 or more years) were each crosstabulated with whether or not teachers responded to the questionnaire. These analyses indicated there was no relationship between teacher race and survey participation for either transferred or control teachers, that is, minority and nonminority teachers responded to the survey in equal proportions. However, experienced transferred teachers ($\underline{X}^2 = 84.8$, $\underline{df} = 2$, $\underline{p} < .001$) and experienced control teachers ($\underline{X}^2 = 9.5$, $\underline{df} = 2$, $\underline{p} < .01$) were more likely to respond to the survey than their less experienced counterparts.

Characteristics of Respondent Groups

All survey respondents were asked to give their sex, race, educational attainment, appeals process experience, and teaching experience. Responses were used to obtain a profile of each respondent group.

Table 4 shows that more than three-fourths of the transferred teachers who responded to the survey were female (77.0%) and that minority and white respondents were approximately equally represented (48.9% vs. 46.0% respectively). About one transferred teacher in three (33.9%) had earned a graduate degree. Nearly two of every three had less than 10 years teaching experience. About half of the transferred teachers (51.9%) had not appealed their integration reassignment and of the 354 who appealed, only 10 (2.8%) had been sustained.

Responding transferred teachers were representative of all Chicago teachers in terms of race and sex but were less experienced and less likely to possess a

graduate degree. These experiences and education differences between responding transferred staff and all Chicago staff were consistent with the Board of Education's policy which was to make all possible matches from the lowest category before matching teachers in the next higher experience category.

Characteristics of control teachers who responded to the survey appear in Table 2, columns 3 and 4. Compared to transferred teachers, control teachers included a higher proportion of non-minority staff (55.1% vs. 46.0%) and staff having training beyond the bachelor's level (46.8% vs. 33.9%). Responding control teachers were also more experienced than responding transferred teachers. All these differences were significant by a test of proportions. Responding control principals included proportionally more non-minority individuals (81.3% vs. 52.7%), proportionally fewer males (53.1% vs. 66.2%) and proportionally more individuals with at least five years experience (87.6% vs 58.1%) than responding transferred principals.

In sum, transferred staff who responded to the survey were representative of all transferred staff with respect to race. However, transferred respondents were more experienced than transferred staff as a whole. Comparisons of responding transferred teachers and principals to, respectively, responding control teachers and principals indicated proportionally more non-minority staff and proportionally more experienced staff were found in the control groups.

Procedures Implemented to Ease Transition Difficulties

All respondents were asked to indicate which of five orientation procedures had been implemented at their school (or, in the case of principals, in their district) to help transferred staff adapt to their new assignments. They were also asked to indicate if these procedures had been helpful. For teachers, the five procedures were as follows:

1. Holding regularly scheduled orientation meetings for reassigned staff and holdover staff.
2. Holding regularly scheduled meetings between the principal and individual reassigned teachers to discuss school characteristics and programs, the teacher's goals, the principal's expectations, etc.
3. Assigning to each reassigned teacher a holdover teacher familiar with the school who could handle problems encountered by the reassigned teacher.
4. Distributing a handbook on school policies and regulations to each reassigned teacher.
5. Discussing with reassigned teachers the services available in the community (e.g., nearest place to cash a check, nearest grocery store, nearest public transportation, etc.) to familiarize them with the locale.

The five procedures listed for principals were reworded slightly but essentially identical in content.

Table 3 gives the frequencies with which transferred and control staff

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Insert Table 3 about here

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indicated each transition procedure had been implemented at their schools. The most striking impression one draws from these data is that very little was done to help transferred teachers and principals become established in their new assignments. For example, only 37.4% of the transferred staff reported receiving a handbook of rules and regulations for their new school,

and this was the most frequently reported assistance procedure. Just less than one-third (33.0%) of the transferred staff had regular faculty orientation meetings. Only slightly more than one in five (22.3%) reported regular private meetings with their new principals, or, in the case of transferred principals, with their new district superintendent, about the same percentage of staff (18.2%) who reported being assigned a "buddy" from the holdover staff. Only one teacher in nine reported receiving an orientation to the community in which his/her new assignment was located. The responses of control staff were highly similar to those of transferred teachers, corroborating transferred teachers' reports of minimal support.

Additional analysis of these items (not shown) support the contention that very little was done to acclimate transferred staff in their new assignment. For example, 33.2% of the transferred teachers and 27.0% of the transferred principals indicated that none of the five procedures listed had been done in their behalf. Another 26.3% of transferred teachers and 25.7% of the transferred principals indicated that only one of the five procedures had been implemented in their schools. Thus, well over half of the reassigned staff began work in their new school with virtually no formal support from administrators and holdover staff.

Perceptions of the Impact of Faculty Integration Transfers on Pupil Achievement and School Administrative Functioning

Both teachers and principals were asked if they felt the faculty integration transfer program would have an adverse effect on pupil achievement and normal administrative procedures at their school (see Table 4). On the

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Insert Table 4 about here

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issue of pupil achievement, the opinions of transferred teachers differed substantially from the other three respondent groups. A plurality of transferred teachers (40.2%) believed the integration reassignments would have an adverse effect on pupil achievement. A plurality of the respondents in the other three groups believe the faculty transfers would not adversely effect pupil achievement.

Insert Table 4 about here

Pluralities of all four groups believed that administrative functioning of the schools would not be impaired by the transfer program. Transferred principals, in particular, were relatively optimistic about the consequences of the transfer program; 73% believed student achievement would not be adversely affected and 60.8% indicated that the transfers would not disrupt normal administrative procedures. For all respondent groups, there was a relatively high percentage of staff who indicated they were uncertain as to the probable consequences of the integration transfers on pupil achievement (23.0%) and school administration (20.6%).

Satisfaction Ratings: Present Assignment Compared to Previous Assignment

Teachers and principals were asked to indicate if their present assignment was more, equally, or less satisfactory than their previous assignment on seven dimensions: commuting distance, education programs, student discipline, community/parental support, student achievement levels, staff relationships, and teacher/student relationships. Their responses are summarized in Table 5.

Insert Table 5 about here

These data reveal, first, that a majority of the transferred teachers who expressed an opinion indicated their new assignment was equally or more satisfactory than their previous assignment on all dimensions except travel distance and staff relations. For transferred principals, travel distance was the only dimension rated as less satisfactory by a majority of the respondents. Second, on every dimension, a higher percentage of transferred teachers than transferred principals were less satisfied with their new assignment. Third, on all seven dimensions a substantial percentage of transferred teachers (at least one third) and transferred principals (at least 23.0%) rated their new assignment as less satisfactory than their previous one. Finally, on all seven dimensions the percentage of transferred staff who found their new assignment less satisfactory exceeded the percentage who found it to be more satisfactory.

There were substantial differences in the responses of minority and white teachers to these items. As shown in Table 6, a greater percentage of

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Insert Table 6 about here

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minority staff members found their integration assignments equally or more satisfactory than their previous school assignment. Transferred minority staff were especially satisfied with community/parental support, (67.7%), student achievement levels (66.7%) and teacher-student relationships (69.0%). White transferred teachers, in contrast, were more likely than minority transferred staff to rate their integration assignment less satisfactory than their previous teaching assignment. This is hardly surprising. Many

of the minority transferred teachers had been previously assigned to schools with a high percentage of students from low income families. These teachers usually switched positions with white teachers previously assigned to schools in more affluent Chicago neighborhoods.

After separately analyzing responses to the seven satisfaction items, a composite satisfaction rating was computed for each respondent. Composite satisfaction scores take values between 1.00 and 3.00. Scores of 2.0 or above indicate that the respondent's transfer assignment compared favorably with his/her previous assignment (i.e., is equally or more satisfactory). Scores between 1.00 and 1.99 indicate that the respondent's transfer assignment was relatively less satisfactory than his/her previous school. The higher the score, the more favorable the respondent rated the school to which he/she had been transferred compared to his/her previous school. Mean composite satisfaction scores for several respondent subgroups, appearing in Table 7, were tested satistically. These t-test comparisons suggest

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Insert Table 7 about here

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the following:

1. Teachers who were reassigned to enhance faculty integration were less satisfied with their new school than were teachers who obtained new assignments under other circumstances. Principals who were reassigned for Title VI compliance purposes were also less satisfied with their new assignments than principals who transferred under different circumstances. These are hardly surprising findings. Teachers and principals transferred for reasons other than enhancing integration generally requested the school to which they were reassigned.

2. The difference in the composite satisfaction scores of transferred teachers and transferred principals are not satistically significant, (test not shown); both groups rated the schools to which they were involuntarily reassigned less satisfactory overall than their previous school

Although transferred staff generally rate their 1977-78 school less satisfactory than their previous school, not all transferred teachers and transferred principals were equally unhappy with their Title VI compliance reassignments. There were significant differences in composite satisfaction scores among the transferred staff as a function of race, experience, and appeals process experience. For example, the data in Table 7 also indicates that:

1. Transferred minority and transferred white teachers both rated their faculty integration assignments as less satisfactory than their 1976-77 school assignment. However, transferred minority teachers found their integration assignments less dissatisfactory than white transferred teachers. Similarly, transferred principals generally preferred their 1976-77 schools to the ones to which they were involuntarily assigned. However, minority principals were less dissatisfied with their new schools than white principals.
2. Both experienced and inexperienced transferred teachers rated their integration assignment less satisfactory overall than their previous assignment. Teachers having four or fewer years experience, however, were less dissatisfied with their new school than were teachers who had more than five years experience.

Experienced transferred principals, in contrast, were no more dissatisfied with their integration assignment than were inexperienced transferred principals.

3. Teachers and principals who did not appeal their reassignment were more satisfied with their integration assignment than teachers and principals who did appeal. It is reasonable to suppose that staff who were most unhappy at thier new school were also more likely to have their transfer rescinded through the appeals process.

4. Transferred teachers and principals who endorsed the need for special transition programs, and transferred teachers and principals who believed the transfer program would adversely affect pupil achievement and school administration were more dissatisfied with their integration assignments than were respectively, transferred staff who believed special transition programs were unnecessary and transferred staff who believed that the integration reassignments would not negatively affect pupil achievement or school functioning.

5. Transferred teachers who indicated that two or more formal procedures were implemented to help them adapt to their new assignments were less dissatisfied with their new school than transferred teachers who reported minimal support (i.e., at most one transition procedure implemented) during the transition period. However, it is not clear if these higher satisfaction ratings are attributable to the greater desirability of the schools which implemented transition procedures or to presence of the transition procedures themselves, or to a combination of the two.

SUMMARY

All teachers and principals who were transferred in order to integrate the faculties of Chicago public schools and a randomly selected sample of staff who were not transferred were surveyed to determine their perceptions of the reassignment program. Responses to the survey indicated:

1. Both transferred and non-transferred teachers and principals indicated that there had been minimal or no orientation or other inservice activities to aquaint transferred staff with their new schools.
2. A plurality of the transferred principals, non-transferred principals, and non-transferred teachers believed the faculty integration reassignments would not adversely effect either student achievement or school administrative functioning. In contrast, a plurality of transferred teachers believed the staff reassignments would cause student achievement to decline.
3. A majority of the transferred staff rated their integration assignment as equally or more satisfactory than their previous assignment in terms of educational programs, student discipline, community/parental support, student achievement levels, and teacher/student relationships. An overwhelming majority rated commuting distance to their new school as less satisfactory than travel to their previous assignment.
4. There were substantial differences in the satisfaction ratings of different teacher groups. In general, minority staff found their integration assignment more satisfactory than white staff members, teachers with four or fewer years experience

were more satisfied with their transfer assignment than teachers having five or more years experience, and teachers who were assigned to schools that implemented procedures to facilitate transition were more satisfied than teachers who were assigned to schools which provided minimal staff support during the transition period.

Reference

Board of Education of the City of Chicago. Plan for the implementation of the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 related to: integration of faculties, assignment patterns of principals, and bilingual education programs. Chicago: Author, 1977.

Footnotes

[1]683 of the 2,150 teachers who were transferred between June 14 and December 10, 1977 successfully appealed their reassignments by January 11, 1978. Their names were removed from the transferred teacher file and, consequently, were not surveyed in this study.

[2]A staff integration questionnaire was not mailed to 15 transferred principals.

[3]Data from 85 questionnaires returned after April 1, 1978 were not included in the analyses reported here.

Table 1

Number of Teachers and Principals Surveyed and

Number and Percentage of Questionnaires Returned

Respondent Group	Number Surveyed	Number Responding	Rate of Return
Transferred teachers	1,467	805	54.8%
Control teachers	625	265	42.4%
Total teachers	2,092	1,070	51.1%
Transferred principals	86	74	86.0%
Control principals	50	32	64.0%
Total principals	136	106	77.9%
Total transferred staff (teachers and principals)	1,553	879	56.6%
Total control staff (teachers and principals)	675	297	44.0%
Grand total	2,228	1,176	52.8%

Table 2

Characteristics of Transferred Teachers, Control Teachers, Transferred Principals, and Control Principals Who Responded to the Faculty Integration Questionnaire

Characteristic	Teachers				Principals				Total Respondents	
	Transferred		Control		Transferred		Control			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	805	100	265	100	74	100	32	100	1,176	100
Race:										
White	370	46.0	146	55.1	39	52.7	26	81.3	581	49.4
Minority	396	49.8	108	40.8	33	44.6	5	15.6	540	45.9
No Response	41	5.1	11	4.2	2	2.7	1	3.1	55	4.7
Sex:										
Male	160	19.9	68	25.7	49	66.2	17	53.1	294	25.0
Female	620	77.0	189	71.3	25	33.8	13	40.6	847	72.0
No Response	25	3.1	8	3.0	0	----	2	6.2	35	3.0
Education:										
Bachelor's	513	63.7	136	51.3	1	1.4	1	3.1	651	55.4
Master's	186	23.1	71	26.8	8	10.8	4	12.5	269	22.9
Master's plus (36 hours)	87	10.8	46	17.4	52	70.3	21	65.6	206	17.5
Ph.D	1	0.1	7	12.6	8	10.8	3	9.4	19	1.6
Other	6	0.7	0	0.0	2	2.7	1	3.1	9	0.8
No Response	12	1.5	5	1.9	3	4.1	2	6.2	22	1.9
Experience (Teachers)										
1 - 4 years	215	26.7	25	9.4	--	----	--	----	240	22.4
5 - 9 years	307	38.1	69	26.0	--	----	--	----	376	35.1
10 - 14 years	153	19.0	66	24.9	--	----	--	----	219	20.5
15 - 19 years	66	8.2	39	14.7	--	----	--	----	105	9.8
20 or more years	15	1.9	46	17.4	--	----	--	----	51	4.8
No Response	49	6.1	20	1.5	--	----	--	----	69	6.4
Experience (as Principals)										
1 - 2 years	---	----	---	----	22	29.7	1	3.1	22	20.8
3 - 5 years	---	----	---	----	7	9.5	1	3.1	8	7.5
6 - 9 years	---	----	---	----	16	21.6	6	18.8	22	20.8
10 - or more	---	----	---	----	27	36.5	22	68.8	48	45.3
No Response	---	----	---	----	2	2.7	2	6.2	6	5.7
Appeals process experience:										
Did not appeal	418	51.9	---	----	46	62.2	--	----	464	52.8
Appeal denied	256	31.8	---	----	14	18.9	--	----	260	29.6
Appeal sustained[a]	10	1.2	---	----	0	0.0	--	----	10	1.1
Other (pending, reappealing, etc.)	88	11.0	---	----	12	16.2	--	----	100	11.4
No Response	33	4.1	---	----	2	2.7	--	----	35	4.0

[a]Almost all staff who were sustained on appeal were not surveyed. See footnote 1.

Table 3

Frequency With Which Various Procedures Were Implemented

To Ease Transition Difficulties of Transferred Teachers and Principals

Procedure	Transferred Staff Reporting Implementation[a]		Control Staff Reporting Implementation[a]	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Regular orientation meetings	290	33.0	85	32.1
Regular private meetings with principal (or district superintendent)	196	22.3	54	20.4
Assigning "budy" to each transferred teacher	160	18.2	48	18.1
Distribution of school district handbook	329	37.4	78	29.4
Discussions about new community	100	11.4	28	10.6

[a]Teachers and Principals combined.

Table 4

Impact of Integration Transfers on Pupil Achievement and School Administration: Opinions of the Four Respondent Groups

Item and Responses	Respondent Group: Teachers, Transfer N	%	Teachers, Control N	%	Principals, Transfer N	%	Principals, Control N	%	Total N	%
Transfers have adversely effected pupil achievement										
Yes	324	(40.2)	76	(28.7)	10	(13.5)	2	(21.9)	417	(35.5)
No	289	(35.9)	102	(38.5)	54	(23.0)	15	(46.9)	460	(39.1)
Not sure	176	(21.9)	81	(30.6)	8	(10.2)	5	(15.6)	270	(23.0)
No Response	16	(2.0)	6	(2.3)	2	(2.7)	5	(15.6)	26	(2.5)
Transfers have disrupted administrative functioning										
Yes	244	(30.3)	63	(23.8)	20	(27.0)	8	(25.0)	335	(28.5)
No	341	(42.4)	152	(57.4)	45	(60.8)	14	(43.8)	552	(46.9)
Not sure	202	(25.1)	33	(12.5)	7	(9.5)	1	(3.1)	742	(20.6)
No Response	18	(2.2)	17	(6.4)	2	(2.7)	9	(28.1)	46	(3.9)

Table 5

Frequency Distribution of Satisfaction Ratings: Integration Assignment Compared to Previous School Assignment

	Satisfaction rating: Integration assignment compared to previous school assignment							
	Less Satisfactory		Equally Satisfactory		More Satisfactory		No Response	
Category	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Transferred Teachers:								
Travel distance	553	68.7	151	18.8	57	7.1	44	5.5
Educational programs	328	40.7	268	33.3	144	17.9	65	8.1
Student discipline	364	45.2	238	29.6	148	18.4	55	6.8
Community/parental support	271	33.7	291	36.1	143	17.8	100	12.4
Student achievement levels	341	42.4	280	34.8	118	14.7	66	8.2
Staff relationships	373	46.3	281	34.9	80	9.9	71	8.8
Teacher/student relationships	262	32.5	415	51.6	68	8.4	60	7.5
Transferred Principals								
Travel distance	42	56.8	18	24.3	9	12.2	5	6.8
Educational programs	28	37.8	28	37.8	12	16.2	6	8.1
Student discipline	25	33.8	32	43.2	8	10.8	9	12.2
Community/parental support	20	27.0	34	45.9	8	10.8	12	16.2
Student achievement levels	28	37.8	21	28.4	14	18.9	17	14.9
Staff relationships	18	24.3	36	48.6	11	14.9	9	12.2
Teacher/student relationships	17	23.0	39	52.7	6	8.1	12	16.2

Table 6

Percentage of White and Minority Transferred Teachers Who Rated Their Faculty Integration Assignment Equally or More Satisfactory vs. Less Satisfactory

	Integration Assignment Is:			
	Equally or More Satisfactory		Less Satisfactory	
Dimension	Minority (%)	White (%)	Minority (%)	White (%)
Distance to work	28.4	23.5	68.3	70.3
Educational programs	57.6	45.6	35.3	46.8
Student discipline	56.4	39.0	37.3	55.1
Community/parental support	63.7	45.4	25.6	42.4
Student achievement levels	66.7	33.0	25.9	60.0
Staff relationships	43.9	47.9	47.5	45.1
Teacher/student relationships	69.0	51.7	25.6	40.3

Table 7

Mean Composite Satisfaction Scores for Various Categories of Respondents

Comparison Groups	Teachers N	Mean	SD	t	Principals N	Mean	SD	t
All Respondents:								
Transferred	770	1.67	.465	7.14***	70	1.73	.434	3.75***
Control	72	2.09	.554		18	2.18	.512	
Transferred Staff Only								
Race:								
White	352	1.57	.484	5.55***	37	1.64	415	1.98*
Minority	384	1.76	.430		37	1.85	.428	
Experience:								
Less than 5 years	207	1.86	.465	7.26***	XX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Five or more years	523	1.59	.446		XX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Less than 3	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	18	1.82	.518	1.25
Three or more	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	50	1.68	.393	
Appeal:								
Did not	416	1.77	.472	8.11***	46	1.83	.427	2.39**
Did	289	1.50	.400		14	1.47	.338	
Transfers Will Adversely Effect Student Achievement:								
Yes	314	1.43	.388	13.05***	8	1.53	.529	1.28
No	276	1.88	.431		54	1.78	.418	
Transfers Will Adversely Effect School Administration:								
Yes	328	1.46	.400	11.07***	19	1.55	.456	2.27*
No	328	1.87	.467		44	1.82	.412	
Transition Procedures Implemented To Assist Transferred Staff:								
Two or more[a]	159	1.87	.420	6.36***	21	2.09	.383	-2.40*
Less than 2[a]	611	1.62	.462		49	2.35	.434	

[a]There were five procedures listed

*$p < .05$

**$p < .01$

***$p < .001$